/352 cont./

B 772 811 interpret it as though the Indian says, "I am a human being and let the animals behave like human beings too." The reverse, that human beings are animals, also occurs, and, to be sure, in B [186] the good and bad sense. The Trumaí are water animals because they sleep at the bottom of the river. The Bakaïrí say this in B [171] all seriousness. We likewise encounter among other tribes this same belief in human beings who live in the water. The Bororó BO [827] maintain that if one chews certain leaves one can remain for hours under the surface of the water and catch fish. I was unable to learn anything more specific about the "water life" of the Trumaí, except that they like to attack other tribes on the river and supposedly throw captives in the water with their arms tied. I do not know whether they were formerly river nomads, like the Guató; at any rate, they first learned agriculture from their B [186] neighbors. Whatever may have suggested this belief about them to the Bakaïrí, it will not be vitiated by any conclusions that we might draw on the basis of our natural laws, "but, after all, the Trumaí are not animals, not fishes"; rather, the Bakaïrí concludes that because the Trumaí sleep in the river they are water animals, and he mocks and despises them, as happens to every tribe with BO 772 811 [775] strange customs. The Bororó pride themselves on the fact that they are red araras. They not only turn into araras after death, /353/ as well as into certain other animals, not only are the araras Bororó and treated accordingly -- they also express their relationship to the brilliant bird so cold-bloodedly that they designate themselves as araras as though a caterpillar were to say that it is a butterfly and, in doing so, do not at all wish to give themselves merely a name completely independent from their nature.

B 772 811 [171] Thus, the Trumaí are water animals because they have a habit of water animals; the Bororó are araras because their dead are transformed into araras. One tries to interpret these and similar phenomena by the confusion of names and things which easily occurs in tradition. This is decidedly not the case among our Indians. Though it may be readily conceded that, where the basic view is present, such confusion automatically appears, nevertheless the basic view, undoubtedly present, must be put